



KEEP UP FIGHT AGAINST RACISM

WHY WE SHOULDN'T LET THE MOVEMENT BE TAMED >>PAGE 6 MURDER VICTIMS 'DEHUMANISED' BY POLICE >>PAGE 20 REPORTS FROM PROTESTS ACROSS BRITAIN >>PAGE 20

Socialist Worker

£1 | No 2711 | 1 - 7 July 2020 | socialistworker.co.uk

IT'S UNSAFE TO END LOCKDOWN



TORIES ARE GAMBLING WITH OUR LIVES

THE TORIES' reckless lifting of the lockdown threatens many more unnecessary coronavirus deaths.

Already on Monday they had to reimpose restrictions in Leicester as cases surged. It's business interests that are driving policy. And it will be poorer people, and black and Asian people, who will be hit hardest.

>>Pages 2&3



PUT PEOPLE BEFORE PROFITS

INTERVIEW

Richard Horton—the system failed over coronavirus

RICHARD HORTON, the longstanding editor of the medical journal The Lancet, is utterly scathing about the establishment's handling of the coronavirus crisis.

He told Socialist Worker why—and says one of the lessons is that “we need a mass movement of resistance to say that enough is enough”.

>>Pages 14&15

LABOUR



Starmer attacks the left and Palestine rights

LABOUR LEADER Keir Starmer has sent his clearest signal yet that he will attack left wing party members—and use criticism of Israel as an excuse.

Left wing Labour members face an assault. And the right to campaign in solidarity with Palestine is under attack.

>>Page 6

CORONAVIRUS

Warning from the world over lifting the lockdown

MORE THAN half a million people across the world are now known to have died from coronavirus. The real figure could be much higher.

In many countries, the virus is spiralling out of control. Where lockdown is lifted too soon more people die.

>>Page 8



THE THINGS THEY SAY

'People should go back to drinking a yard of ale'

Tory Jacob Rees-Mogg has advice for how to distance in pubs

'Kung flu'

How Donald Trump described coronavirus at a rally last weekend

'The president does not believe it is offensive to note that this virus came from China'

White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany defends Trump

'The window is closing for us to take action and get this under control'

US secretary of health and human services Alex Azar on the rate of infections in the US

'It is at best disrespectful to go out in public without using PPE'

Brazilian judge Renato Coelho Borelli orders right wing president Jair Bolsonaro to wear a face mask

'We would be imposing fines on families if they are not sending their children back'

Tory education secretary Gavin Williamson threatens parents who keep their children at home



A 'nasty rebound' of virus is on horizon

The Tory plan to reopen businesses across England comes as Covid-19 continues to kill hundreds every week, writes **Tomáš Tengely-Evans**

TORY PRIME minister Boris Johnson said on Monday that coronavirus is a "disaster" and an "absolute nightmare" for Britain.

It is Johnson's disaster—and it could get worse as the Tories push ahead with a reckless reopening of businesses this weekend.

Pubs, bars, restaurants, hairdressers, galleries, theatres and much more will reopen in England from this Saturday, 4 July.

The social distancing rule of two metres will decrease to "one metre plus" where two is not possible.

The change came after many bosses said reopening would not be possible with strict social distancing rules.

Various right wing pundits declared 4 July to be Britain's coronavirus "independence day".

Britain has the highest official death toll in Europe and the third highest in the world. Johnson, who has said he's "very proud" of the government's record, sits in the top three alongside Donald Trump's US and

far right president Jair Bolsonaro's Brazil.

Official figures show more than 43,000 people have died of coronavirus in Britain and that there have been over 311,000 confirmed cases.

The real figure is likely to be higher due to the way Covid-19 deaths are counted, with the official one only registering those who have tested positive.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) put the death toll by 12 June at more than 53,000.

The lifting of the lockdown comes amid warnings of another spike in cases. They included one from Sir Jeremy Farrar, a medical researcher who sits on the official Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (Sage).

He warned there could be a "very nasty rebound" of the virus in the winter and said he was "worried" about a surge in cases ahead of 4 July.

Farrar told the BBC's Andrew Marr Show, "We're on a knife edge.



BORIS JOHNSON at a school in west London last week

"I would anticipate we would see an increase in new cases over the coming weeks."

The number of official coronavirus deaths announced has been falling since mid-April.

But the downward trend slowed last week—and the danger remains high in some of the most at risk areas.

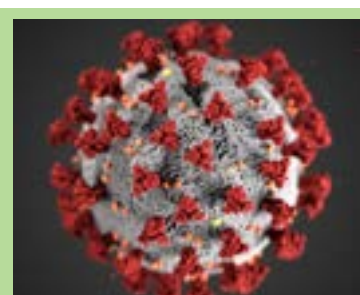
People living in British care homes are the most likely to die out of all

care home residents across Europe, according to analysis by the London School of Economics.

It said the risk of death in Britain is 13 times higher than in Germany, which has also seen a surge in cases.

The Tories hope to blame ordinary people for going to beaches or parks outdoors while they herd people back to work.

If there is a fatal second wave, the blood will be on Johnson's hands.



Read more

socialistworker.co.uk has many articles on the virus and its impact

Here are some recent ones you might like—

● **Virus outbreak after workers' warnings ignored**

bit.ly/SWonWalkout

● **Tory Covid-19 moves will mean more death**

bit.ly/Torymoves

● **Out of work and out of money—how lives are being torn apart**

bit.ly/workvirus



Doctors protesting in London on Tuesday

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Doctors protest to demand a strategy to wipe out Covid-19

DOCTORS PROTESTED outside Downing Street on Tuesday to "highlight the risks of indoor spread".

The protest, organised by the Doctors in Unite section of the Unite union, came as the Tories prepared to reopen pubs and restaurants.

Dr Jonathon Fluxman, a Doctors in Unite member and retired GP, currently works in the Covid Clinical Assessment Service.

He said, "The press has reported that a number of bars in Florida have had to shut down again recently due to outbreaks of Covid-19.

"In one case a group of 15 friends were infected after a night out at one bar."

Dr Jackie Applebee, Doctors in

Unite chair, said the risks were high as "Covid-19 is an indoor disease".

"This is plain from a number of outbreaks, like in the meat and poultry processing plants, choirs, restaurants and the deaths of London bus drivers," she explained.

"International experience has shown us the dangers of the three Cs—crowds, closed spaces and close contact.

"We need a strategy to eliminate the virus. Unless and until the government develops one there will be many more unnecessary deaths."

The People Before Profit health activists' group planned protests on Friday this week in support of NHS workers and extra funding to mark the service's birthday.

Death rate is higher for disabled people

SHOCKING NEW figures show how disabled people have been disproportionately hit by coronavirus.

Official for National Statistics (ONS) figures show that around 22,500 disabled people in England and Wales died of Covid-19 between 2 March and 15 May.

That compares to around 15,500 non-disabled people.

The figures also show that disabled people who contract the disease have a higher risk of dying.

Younger disabled men—who are aged nine to 64 and "limited a lot" in daily life—were 6.5 times more likely to die.

Disabled women in the same age group have a death rate that is 11.3 times higher than women of the same age who are not disabled.

Overall around 1,600 disabled people in the nine to 64 age group have died of the virus compared to 2,100 non-disabled people. This figure takes into account people who are defined as both "limited a lot" and "limited a little".

In response to the figures,



Disabled people are more likely to die from coronavirus

disabled people's organisations are demanding an inquiry into the disproportionate deaths.

Mike Smith is the chief executive of the east London disabled people's organisation Real. He said, "These numbers show the harsh reality that

lies behind the statements that Covid-19 only affects 'older people and those with pre-existing conditions'.

"There is an urgent need for government to provide support for disabled people to remain safe and have a viable existence."

Outbreaks in schools see big increase

by **SADIE ROBINSON**

THE TORIES have floated the idea of fining parents who keep their children out of schools in September because of coronavirus fears.

They are rattled as their plan to push big numbers of children back to school from last month is failing.

For all the pressures on working class people caused by the lockdown, and Tory propaganda, millions have kept their children at home.

New government figures show that just over 12 percent of children in England were in education settings on 18 June, despite 92 percent being open.

This comes as the number of suspected coronavirus outbreaks in schools nearly doubled last week, according to figures from Public Health England (PHE).

The news is a stark warning about how the Tory easing of the lockdown is putting health at risk.

The PHE figures cover the third week that primary schools across England reopened to wider numbers of children. It was the first week that secondary schools also began reopening to some year groups.

Settings

PHE said that there was "little change in the number of outbreaks in care homes, hospitals or "other settings" last week, which was the year's week 25.

Yet in schools, cases rose sharply. "School outbreaks have increased over the past two weeks from 15 in week 23, to 24 in week 24, to 44 in week 25," it said.

Schools suffered 16 more outbreaks last week than were recorded in hospitals.

PHE said the rise "coincides with wider school reopening". It also said the figures follow an "expansion of testing and tracing". But this rise in testing and tracing has not detected a similar rise in other settings.

The PHE said it expects most of the outbreaks to be linked to Covid-19.

And schools are accounting for a bigger proportion of outbreaks across England.

Overall, the number of new acute respiratory outbreaks went up from 199 to 223 last week.

Schools made up nearly 20 percent of them—compared to 12 percent the week before.

Johnson claims his schools plan is motivated by a concern about child poverty, saying, "You can't tackle inequality if kids aren't back in school."

The truth is that the Tories don't care about the welfare of children, school workers or their families.

Their policies are driven by a desire to push parents back to work—regardless of whether this risks a second spike in the virus.

Get in touch with Socialist Worker



Email reports@socialistworker.co.uk

Web www.socialistworker.co.uk

Facebook "Socialist Worker (Britain)"

Twitter @socialistworker



Newsdesk
020 7840 5656
Circulation
020 7840 5601



Write to
Socialist Worker
PO Box 74955,
London
E16 9EJ



A warning from the world—it's dangerous to open up

by SADIE ROBINSON

MORE THAN half a million people across the world are now known to have died from coronavirus. The real figure could be much higher.

More than ten million people have tested positive for Covid-19.

And in many countries, the virus appears to be spiralling out of control.

Cases are rising by around a million a week, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). And the rate of contagion has doubled since 21 May.

A panel advising Israel's national security council said the country has "lost control of the pandemic". Authorities in South Korea have said the country is now in the grip of a second wave.

Some 44,000 new cases were reported across the US by 4pm on Friday—its biggest daily rise.

Tens of thousands of new cases are now being reported every day in both India and Brazil, with the two countries accounting for over a third of all new cases over the past week.

The death toll across Latin America could rise to over 380,000 by October, according to some researchers. It currently stands at around 100,000.

Africa

Across Africa, confirmed Covid-19 cases reached a new high of over 371,000, including 9,484 deaths.

Ireland last week suffered its highest number of infections in a fortnight. And a record rise in daily new cases was reported in the Czech Republic.

Many countries eased lockdown restrictions only to find that new cases of the virus rose rapidly.

Restrictions have been reimposed in Beijing after a surge in cases. Over 300 people have been diagnosed with Covid-19 in Beijing since mid-June.

Nearly half a million people in Hebei province, which surrounds Beijing, are now under lockdown. In Anxin county, around 90 miles from

FIGURE IT OUT

44,000

New cases of coronavirus were reported in the US on Friday of last week—its biggest daily increase

259,000

New cases in Brazil in the seven days up to last Sunday

380,000

People in Latin America are expected to have died of coronavirus by October

Beijing, neighbourhoods have been "sealed off" with people needing permission to leave their homes.

Positive

Germany has renewed a lockdown in the western region of Guetersloh, after 1,300 slaughterhouse workers tested positive for the virus.

And in Australia, authorities are considering reimposing some form of lockdown after an outbreak of cases in Victoria, Melbourne.

Some 85 new cases were reported there on Monday, recorded over a 24-hour period, and 75 were in Victoria. It was the biggest daily rise in Victoria since March.

In Britain, the Tories tell us that it's safe to significantly ease lockdown measures.

The evidence from across the globe suggests that this is not the case.

The number of people who have died from coronavirus has now overtaken the number who die each year from malaria. And it has taken less than half a year to do so.

The global death rate averages around 78,000 a month, according to the WHO.



What's your story?

Email with your ideas
reports@socialistworker.co.uk

A MASS grave for victims of coronavirus in Manaus, Brazil

Trump's drive to end lockdown is behind growing catastrophe in US

THE DEATH toll from Covid-19 surpassed 128,000 in the US on Monday of this week.

Yet president Donald Trump is still driving a return to work and the easing of lockdown measures.

In a speech made to a Students For Trump rally in Arizona on Tuesday of last week Trump claimed the virus was "going away."

But the easing of lockdown measures has caused cases of the virus to soar in several states.

In Texas, Florida and Arizona, reopening plans have been paused due to a rise in cases.

The state governor of Texas, Greg Abbott, said, "Covid-19 has taken a very swift and very dangerous turn in Texas over just the past few weeks." It comes after bars and restaurants and other businesses in Texas were allowed to reopen from as early as the beginning of May.

Clare Lemlich is a socialist who lives in Los Angeles and is part of the Marx21 socialist group.

She told Socialist Worker, "The

US accounts for only 4 percent of the world's population, but it's home to a full quarter of global Covid-19 infections.

"This past week several states reported record-breaking infection surges and hospitalisations. "The surge is a direct result of state and local governments prematurely easing stay at home restrictions and re-opening the economy.

"Cases aren't only rising in states run by Republicans eager to get people back to work no matter the cost.

"In Democrat-run California,

cases jumped by 69 percent over just two days."

Clare also pointed to how racism and inequality have determined who is most vulnerable to the virus.

"The scale of inequality and systemic racism that already existed across the country means Black and Latino people are far more likely to get the virus and die from it," she said.

"The US's for-profit medical system means Covid survivors may have to pay huge medical bills for their treatment."

In a very positive sign, Fiat Chrysler workers at the Sterling Heights Assembly Plant near Detroit, stopped work on Saturday evening. They had learned that a worker had tested positive for coronavirus. At least five workers employed at the plant have died from Covid-19.

This action followed two days of walkouts at the Jefferson North Assembly Plant in Detroit demanding better safety measures.

Sophie Squire

Thousands of workers have been infected in Tonnies meatpacking plants

'Germany is not Angela Merkel's success story'

by PHIL BUTLAND
in Germany

THE GERMAN Tory Angela Merkel has received undeserved praise for her handling of the coronavirus crisis.

In truth, all neoliberal governments have deliberately prioritised profits over people's lives. Germany's is no exception.

Merkel's prime concern has always been supporting German big business.

Non-essential workers were forced into work from day one. That was either because their bosses were legally entitled to force them to work, or because at 60 percent of wages, German

furlough payments were the lowest in Europe.

Many bosses chose not to offer furlough payments at all, but to sack workers— which is again allowed under German law.

Germany's hospitals were relatively well placed to deal with the outbreak, but this situation is unlikely to last.

In this year's national budget, where every other department received more funding, healthcare has been slashed by 5 percent.

Recently, Covid-19 outbreaks in several different abattoirs have damaged Germany's reputation for providing a safe environment.

Thousands of workers were infected

in meatpacking plants owned by the Tonnies group.

Most of the affected workers are subcontracted Eastern European migrants with uncertain work permits and precarious working conditions. They are easily forced into working in unsafe conditions.

As the lockdown is slowly eased, pubs and even cinemas are starting to open, causing many to worry how soon a second wave of the virus will hit.

But for many manual workers, homeless people and refugees, the lockdown never existed, and they have been disproportionately hit by the virus.

'Ending quarantine caused new wave in South Korea'

by KIM JONG-HWAN
in South Korea

THE SOUTH Korean government ended social distancing measures and reopened the schools in early May.

A gay bar in Seoul recently became a focal point for the media in regards to the virus.

The government used every possible means to create moral panics by scapegoating those infected and pandered to homophobic ideas.

Currently, the number of daily infected people is

around 20 and 50, but already hospital beds are running out quickly.

In South Korea, the majority of hospitals are private and only 10 percent of the hospital beds are at the government's disposal.

Infections

Recently the government had to shorten the length of the quarantine period from 14 to ten days to cope with the situation, risking more infections.

Several small scale outbreaks have already occurred in logistics centres, call centres, schools,

Karaoke bars and clubs.

What's more worrying is that the majority of infections are now happening in Seoul and its nearby provinces, which together have a population of 26 million people.

The number of patients whose infection route is untraceable is increasing.

More than a quarter of a million people petitioned for closing the schools. Yet the government refused and for the sake of business and profit is keen not to reintroduce social distancing measures.

Socialist Worker
WHAT WE THINK

JOHNSON'S 'NEW DEAL' TO BAIL OUT SYSTEM

BORIS Johnson's promise this week of a "new deal" marked the latest dishonest move in a decade of Tory austerity. The prime minister announced a "New Deal" to tackle "the country's "great unresolved challenges of the last three decades".

He cast himself as a modern-day Franklin D Roosevelt the US president who ploughed money into jobs schemes and the welfare state in order to boost capitalism.

"It sounds positively Rooseveltian," Johnson said of his plans on Monday. "It sounds like a New Deal."

The infrastructure boost comes to £5 billion and isn't new money. The investment is reshaped from Tory chancellor Rishi Sunak's budget in March.

This began to raise public sector net investment from around 2 percent of national income to 3 percent.

Yet despite the launching of some infrastructure projects there has been sluggish investment since the Tories came to office in 2010.

The bosses' Financial Times newspaper says, "Although the money announced by Mr Johnson

will be new for the recipients of the cash—with individual projects to be identified—it has already been scheduled into the economy."

But there is more to it than just Tory spin.

The Tories presented themselves as "anti-establishment" at the general election, promising a "People's Government".

The pandemic has shown that forests of magic money trees are available when it's necessary to save the system.

At the beginning of the crisis, Sunak announced £550 billion in bailouts for businesses.

The government said it could house thousands of homeless

The pandemic has shown that forests of magic money trees are available

people in hotels and put in a furlough scheme that saw the state subsidise wages.

Investors JP Morgan Asset Management estimated this week that central banks across the world had poured £14,000 billion into the system to aid big business.

There is a widespread feeling of not wanting to go back to business as usual—and the Tories know it.

So they are nervous about simply announcing more austerity.

But the money they promise will mainly be to bail out the system, not for the pay, benefits and key services that people need.

The TUC union federation is hoping for a great coming together of bosses, unions and states.

It has a plan for a "better economy" and said, "government action must be ambitious, far-reaching and fast".

But if politicians and bosses have their way, it will be working class people who pay for the pandemic. It will take a fight against the logic of the profit system to win a sustainable, zero carbon economy that puts workers first.

To win a new deal, we need action in the streets and workplaces.

DRUG FIRMS WILL CASH IN

THE CORONAVIRUS crisis is a profit-laden paradise for some pharmaceutical firms. Remdesivir is an anti-viral treatment for Covid-19 shown to help reduce some patients' recovery time. Its US maker, Gilead Sciences, has priced the drug at £318 per dose for governments.

A typical course of the treatment sees patients take six doses over five days. That means the cost of treating one person is £1,907. In the US, it plans to

charge private insurers more than it will charge governments.

This means the typical cost for a patient with insurance will be £2,538.

This drug was developed with at least £57 million in public money. Other—cheaper—drugs that actually cut death rates are available.

Researchers at Oxford university found that dexamethasone, a steroid, cut virus deaths by up to a third for patients on ventilators.

Lead researcher professor Martin Landray said, "There is a clear, clear benefit. Essentially it costs £35 to save a life. This drug is globally available."

Big firms such as Gilead want to focus on less effective medicines that they can make more money from.

Any drug that will help patients in any way should be freely available to all. The fact that they are not is a damning indictment of a system that puts profit over people's lives.

Sign up to our morning newsletter Breakfast in Red and get the latest news every day.

For updates and analysis on the stories that matter go to socialistworker.co.uk/breakfastinred

ANALYSIS

YURI PRASAD



Protests challenge the racist system

THE SCALE and radicalism of the month of Black Lives Matter protests continues to shake those in power.

A poll last week showed that the majority of the American public, including more than half of white people, say they agree with the ideas of the movement.

What is more, eight out of ten questioned think the protests will have at least some influence on the way the police treat black people.

In Britain, home secretary Priti Patel—not known for her commitment to anti-racism—was last week forced to concede all the recommendations of a panel looking into the Windrush Scandal.

That “hostile environment” she now condemns is the same one she once enthusiastically backed.

What the movement has already achieved—forcing the prosecution of some cops accused of racist attacks and murder, for example—it did by sticking to the radicalism that first gave it life. But some of the greatest gains are in a much wider understanding of how racism operates.

For many people who took to the streets, racism is something they now understand as “structural”.

The problem of racist policing, for example, is not a problem simply of individual racist officers but an entire force built on racism.

The way in which our schools fail to teach the truth about the British Empire is not the result of failed history teachers but is symbolic of the racism embedded in the education system.

But as the first phase of semi-spontaneous mass demonstrations appears to have closed there are great dangers that their radicalism can be usurped by those whose agenda is to tame the revolt.

Circling

Already soft-peddling reformists are circling, seeking to divert the anger and initiative of the streets into avenues the system can easily accommodate.

Government and companies will now readily commit to training staff on “unconscious bias”. After all, it says the problem lies not with them as an institution but with people’s individual prejudices.

And they will let a sprinkling of black faces in their boardrooms in the hope of diverting our attention from the way their policies continue to destroy the lives of ordinary black and Asian people.

There are others who are part of the movement who also want solutions within the system.

Those pushing for an enhanced form of black capitalism talk of the empowerment this will bring, but fail to acknowledge that it can only enrich a minority at the expense of the majority.

Those that argue having black bosses exploit black workers is progressive readily forget the vital phrase of Malcolm X, “You can’t have capitalism without racism”.

There’s a reason why every racist Tory and Republican enthusiastically backs the “black business” approach—it’s precisely because it poses no challenge to the system.

Given the political dangers the movement now faces, it is important the Stand Up to Racism and others are formulating demands that continue to pile pressure on the state.

Demanding the end of “Section 60” stop and search zones, which allow the police to harass people without any pretext, and removal of the cop’s life-threatening Taser weapons are ways to put the issue of state racism firmly back at the centre of the agenda.

Insisting upon “illegal migrants” being given full citizen rights is the best defence against the growing threat of a second Windrush Scandal.

And, putting the focus back on to the state is also vital because it reminds us who the biggest actors in the way racism plays out are.

Millions of people across the world are enraged by racism and readily see the connection between it and the capitalist system that is destroying both people and planet.

The radicalism that got us this far can take us a whole lot further.

It must continue to fight over individual issues but also against the system as a whole.

LABOUR PARTY members at their yearly conference raise Palestinian flags

Starmer sacks Long-Bailey to break from left and Palestine

by NICK CLARK

LABOUR LEADER Keir Starmer has sent his clearest signal yet that he will attack left wing party members—and use criticism of Israel as an excuse.

Starmer sacked prominent left wing MP Rebecca Long-Bailey as his shadow education secretary on Thursday.

The reason given was that she tweeted in praise of an article that contained a passing accusation of racism and brutality against Israel.

Prominent actress Maxine Peake said US police officers had learned the technique of kneeling on a person’s neck from Israeli secret services. She was discussing the murder of George Floyd by a US cop who knelt on his neck.

Claim

Israel denies the claim. But it’s true that cops from the US have visited Israel for training, as an Amnesty International report—originally linked to by the Independent article—backs up.

Whether or not the specific accusation that Israeli security services trained cops to kneel on people’s necks is true, it’s not antisemitic to suggest it.

It has nothing to do with hatred of Jewish people for being Jewish.

Long-Bailey’s sacking is the outcome of a years-long campaign to categorise all but the mildest criticism of Israel as antisemitic. The aim is to delegitimise support for Palestine

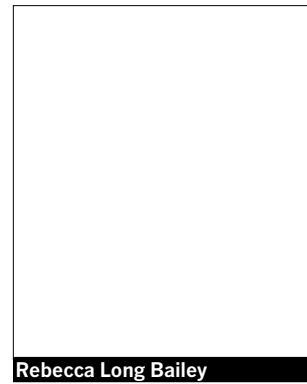
and use it to attack the left, particularly in the Labour Party.

Starmer has seized on this issue to underline that under his leadership there is a clear break from the politics of Jeremy Corbyn.

He is telling the Labour right, the bosses and the right wing media that he is a thoroughly trustworthy mainstream figure.

Tony Blair rushed to say there was now a “leader of the Labour Party that looks as if he could be prime minister”.

Starmer did not unequivocally call for the sacking of Dominic Cummings earlier this year. And he hasn’t called for the sacking of disgraced housing secretary Robert Jenrick. But he sacked Long-Bailey.



Rebecca Long Bailey

Meanwhile shadow ministers Toby Perkins, who attacked travellers in election campaign material, and Rachel Reeves who said immigration could cause race riots, remain in post.

It’s a clear signal to left wing Labour Party members

that voicing any support for Palestinians could end in their expulsion for antisemitism.

It’s also proof that repeated retreats by the left in the face of accusations of antisemitism have been disastrous.

During the leadership campaign Long-Bailey said, “I agree with a secure Israel alongside a viable Palestinian state...I suppose that makes me a Zionist because I agree with Israel’s right to exist and right to self-determine.”

That grim retreat has not saved her.

Left wing Labour Party members increasingly face a witch hunt.

Even more importantly, the right to campaign in solidarity with Palestine—whether you’re in Labour or not—is under attack.

Labour is no home for Socialists

The furore over Long-Bailey’s sacking came as Labour looked set to roll back its supposed support for Palestinians.

Labour’s shadow foreign secretary Lisa Nandy said Labour should back banning the import of goods from Israeli settlements if Israel annexes the West Bank (see page 8).

The policy would be the bare minimum response to the attempt to snatch Palestinian land.

But the leader of the

right wing Board of Deputies said Keir Starmer should reject this as “divisive”.

Meanwhile, Labour’s National Policy Forum (NPF)—which draws up policy documents to be voted on at Labour conferences—looked set to erase support for Palestinians.

Speaking to an event for the Labour left on Saturday, NPF member Adrian Weir said new documents avoid mentioning Palestine or Israel by name.

“Under Jeremy’s leadership our party made a pledge once in government to recognise Palestine as an independent state,” he said.

“I have to tell you that if you thought those policies were in the bank then we’ve been robbed.”

Years of work by left wing Labour members could be undone in one year by sleight of hand. That—and Long-Bailey’s sacking—show there’s no place for socialists in the Labour Party.

Tory cabinet is safe as houses for ministers

by CHARLIE KIMBER

IT'S NOT only Dominic Cummings that Boris Johnson has refused to sack.

He is also protecting housing secretary Robert Jenrick, despite repeated allegations of what looks like corruption.

And part of the reason may be that Johnson himself is embroiled in the scandal.

The Jenrick case centres on a 1,500-home development at the former Westferry printing works in East London.

The developer, former Daily Express owner Richard Desmond, personally gave the Conservative Party £12,000 two weeks after the scheme was approved in January.

The development had previously been rejected by the local council and the government's planning inspectorate.

Jenrick's decision to overrule the rejections was made just 24 hours before the council increased financial penalties it asks developers to pay for infrastructure, known as CIL payments.

This potentially saved Desmond up to £45 million. This money would have been spent by the council on its poorer communities and funding health and education provision.

Desmond seemed to regard the right wing Labour Tower Hamlets council as "Marxist" (see below).

Emerged

It later emerged Jenrick had sat next to Desmond, and three of his company's executives, at a Conservative Party fundraising dinner in November 2019.

Jenrick is also accused of overruling his advisers to reduce the amount of affordable housing required in the development, potentially saving Desmond a further £106 million.

Jenrick's decision was later challenged by Tower Hamlets Council, forcing the minister to back down and say what he did was "unlawful by reason of apparent bias".

He told MPs last week that he alerted his officials to his relationship with Desmond in December 2019—after he had asked them to speed up the project.

However one anonymous civil servant working on the Westferry application has spoken out. They said, "I can confirm that at no point did Mr Jenrick or his special advisers alert us to the fundraiser dinner he attended with Mr Desmond."

It was Boris Johnson who first opened the door to Desmond's scheme. He had three meetings with Desmond before approving a housing scheme on the Westferry site.

Robert Jenrick—Downing Street has his back

This included drinks at the five-star Corinthia Hotel in Westminster in 2015 when he was then mayor of London.

Desmond's company, Northern & Shell, then submitted a second application that almost doubled the size of the development with 1,524 homes in five towers. This was the one that Jenrick eventually approved.

Desmond also revealed last weekend that Johnson had committed to easing gambling rules to assist his Health Lottery.

Johnson has insisted Jenrick's job was safe. He has also swerved questions about his own relationship with Desmond after pictures appeared last week of the pair hugging.

It's reported that Desmond has attended Tory party fundraisers and Downing Street drinks receptions in the last year.

Jenrick should go now.



On other pages...

'Dehumanised' by racist system
>>Page 20

A developing scandal

18 NOVEMBER 2019

This was the day of a Tory fundraising dinner where Jenrick sat next to Desmond. Text message from Jenrick—"Good to spend time with you tonight Richard. See you again soon I hope." Desmond replied, "Thanks Robert I really appreciate your text."

20 NOVEMBER 2019

Text message from Desmond—"Your efficient PA has arranged a meeting for 19 December for meet and site visit. We appreciate the speed as we don't want to give Marxists loads of doe [dough?] for nothing!"

Text message from Jenrick—"Richard. As Secretary of State it is important not to give any appearance of being influenced by applicants of cases that I may

have a role in.

23 DECEMBER 2019

Text message from Desmond—"Morning Robert. We have to get the approval before January 15 otherwise payment of 45 million pounds to Tower Hamlets."

9 JANUARY 2020

Email from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government official—"On timing, my understanding is that SoS is/was insistent that decision issued this week i.e tomorrow—as next week the viability of the scheme is impacted by a change in the London CIL regime."

14 JANUARY 2020

The Development approved by Jenrick.

PROFILE

Boris Johnson

WHEN HE was mayor of London Boris Johnson was eager to deliver what developers wanted.

He told the summit of the ultra-rich in Davos in 2014 that he was on a mission to persuade the owners of "some truly whopping chequebooks" to invest in London.

The same year he backed the privatised Royal Mail's proposals for the Mount Pleasant sorting office site. He took over the planning decision before Camden and Islington councils had even had a chance to consider the application.

A mere 24 percent of the housing approved by Johnson was "affordable".

Royal Mail went on to sell the site at a 565 percent mark up to developer Taylor Wimpey for £193 million.

In 2013 Johnson overturned Southwark council's objection

Boris Johnson and Richard Desmond

to a proposed free school project in Bermondsey. It included 158 flats in two buildings, one a 19-storey tower block. The school attracted a maximum of 60 children and closed abruptly in February 2017.

Johnson's record on affordable housing was so poor that in his last year in office he oversaw planning permissions that granted only 13 percent affordable homes.

Richard Desmond

RICHARD DESMOND is a billionaire media baron who made vast amounts of money from pornography and then moved on to property.

He is the former owner of Express Newspapers and founder of Northern & Shell, which published various celebrity magazines. They include OK! and New! and the newspapers Daily Star and Daily Express.

Desmond made millions from pornographic magazines such as Asian Babes and Nude Wives. He later branched out into satellite porn channels such as Television X and Red Hot.

According to the Sunday Times Rich List he is worth around £2 billion.



A bosses' coalition set up in Ireland

IRELAND'S PARLIAMENT has elected a new prime minister, installing Fianna Fáil leader Micheal Martin at the helm of a grand coalition with Fine Gael.

It's a desperate attempt to maintain the old set-up after it was rejected by voters earlier this year.

Martin succeeds Leo Varadkar of Fine Gael, who becomes deputy premier in a three-way deal with the Greens. Martin will be taoiseach until December 2022, when the office reverts to Varadkar, in an arrangement to rotate the position.

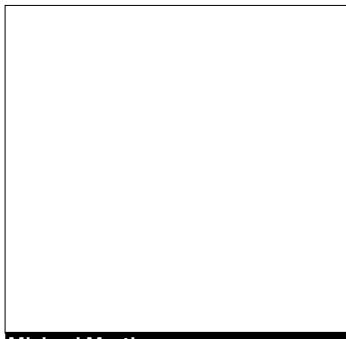
Every government since the foundation of the Irish state in 1922 has been led by either Fianna Fáil or Fine Gael and its predecessor.

The last election saw an historic defeat for the two bosses' parties who between them, received just 44 percent of the popular vote. This was the first time that they took less than 50 percent together.

It was Sinn Féin that took the most votes.

Without the Greens, Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael lacked enough seats for a parliamentary majority.

There were divisions within the Greens over whether to prop up the coalition. But the deal was eventually backed by 76 percent



Micheal Martin

of the party, which is likely to have three cabinet ministers.

People Before Profit, which has three TDs in the Irish parliament said of the new government

"This is a cynical attempt to steal the result of the last election from voters demanding progressive change."

It added that the arrangement was "an alliance designed to protect the interests of the establishment".

"It is a strategy by the Irish establishment to hold on to power using the Green Party as political cover."

The programme for government is high on warm words but in the detail is looks likely the government is preparing for further attacks on workers to pay for the looming economic crisis.

Simon Basketter

Stand with Palestinians against Israeli annexation

by NICK CLARK

ISRAEL LOOKED set to begin moves to annexe up to a third of the Palestinian West Bank from Wednesday of this week.

The coalition government led by racist warmonger Binyamin Netanyahu wants to snatch huge chunks of Palestinian land.

Plans drawn up by Netanyahu's cabinet had not been released as Socialist Worker went to press.

But they are based on a supposed "peace deal" drawn up by the US president Donald Trump.

They're likely to include the annexation of the whole of the Jordan Valley as well as a number of settlements—huge Israeli towns—built illegally on Palestinian land.

Palestinians would be left with fragmented scraps of land, surrounded on all sides by Israel—and under its total military and economic control.

It would be a major step in Israel's decades-long war against Palestinians and their right to exist.

Expelled

Some 850,000 Palestinians were expelled from their homes when Israel was created in 1948. Their expulsion was an act of ethnic cleansing designed to ensure Arabs would be a minority in the new state.

Israel captured the remaining Palestinian land during the Six Day War of 1967, when it invaded and occupied the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.

It has since left Gaza, instead placing it under siege. But it has refused to give up the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and constructing huge settlement blocs there directly connected to Israel.

It now hopes to use these settlements to claim the land as its own.

Meanwhile Palestinians have lived under a repressive military occupation. Military checkpoints, harassment and violence by Israeli soldiers and settlers are part of everyday life.

Netanyahu has bragged that pushing ahead with the plans would confirm Israel's "sovereignty" over Palestinian land.

Meanwhile many Western governments have opposed the annexation plans. This isn't on the basis that annexation is a crime against Palestinians, but because they threaten "security" in the Middle East. For decades Israel has been a cornerstone of the West's domination of the Middle East.

The first settlers in Palestine were backed by the British Empire which hoped they would help to control the Arab population.

Israel has also played the role of the US's most important military ally. It has received billions of dollars in military aid so that it can defend the US's interests against states and resistance movements that threaten it.

But now many Western states worry that annexing the West Bank would undermine that. They have used the promise of a Palestinian state alongside Israel as a way of co-opting Arab leaders and containing Palestinian resistance.

But annexation would show once and for all that such a "two state solution" is impossible. Instead it would mean renewed attempts to force Palestinians from their land.

The only just answer is a single, secular state with equal democratic rights for all its citizens. And that means opposing attempts to drive Palestinians out—and supporting Palestinian resistance.

FRANCE

Voters punish Macron as greens and fascists gain

THE FASCIST National Rally (RN) won the position of mayor of Perpignan in the second round of municipal elections in France on Sunday

It is the first time since 1995 that the Nazis have taken control of a city of over 100,000 people.

In general the RN made few advances and its candidate in Perpignan played down his party membership.

But it is still a boost for party leader Marine Le Pen as she prepares her run for the 2022 presidential election.

It means the RN will seek to implement attacks on Muslims and migrants across a city. Mass

resistance from the start will be important.

The tactic of all the other parties in Perpignan withdrawing after the first round and urging support for the traditional right wing candidate was a total failure.

This "Republican front" just enabled the RN to scoop up many of those who are bitter at the present set-up.

Overall the elections saw mass abstention with just four in ten people voting.

That's down from 62 percent in the similar elections in 2014.

Partly that is due to coronavirus. But it's also about

widespread disillusion with all the political forces on offer.

The neoliberal LREM party of president Emmanuel Macron failed to capture any major cities and gathered just 13 percent of the votes in Paris.

This has prompted talks of a major governmental reshuffle.

Sibeth Ndiaye, government spokesperson, admitted there had been "some very disappointing scores."

The biggest winner was the Europe Ecology-The Greens party.

Together with leftist allies it took a clutch of major cities including Lyon, Strasbourg

and Bordeaux and may take Marseille. It also won in smaller cities such as Grenoble, Poitiers, Annecy, and Tours.

Polls before the vote sowed that "environmental protection" was the number one concern in the 18-34 age group.

The crucial battles in France will not be fought in the city halls.

The Yellow Vest movement, the strikes against Macron's assault on pensions and the mass Black Lives Matter movement have shown the potential power of street and workplace mobilisations.

Charlie Kimber

Tory policy is eugenics

THE GLOBAL market for DNA has been described as the new oil. The global DNA and gene chips market was valued at approximately £2.16 billion in 2018.

The Tories are using Covid-19 to get their share of the money.

In April last year health secretary Matt Hancock set up NHSX—an arm of the NHS dedicated to creating a massive centralised databank.

NHS England said it would be world-leading “in its use of cutting edge genomic technologies to predict and diagnose inherited and acquired disease”.

But there is little evidence that the underlying drivers of disease are primarily genetic.

A study in the journal PLOS One last December found that genetics usually explains no more than 5-10 percent of the risk for several common diseases.

More than 95 percent of diseases or disease risks could not be predicted accurately from the DNA sequence.

The implication is startling—the entire basis for the billions of pounds this government is investing in building a new privatised NHS infrastructure is scientifically unfounded.

Cummings’ hope is that a genomics prediction programme would ultimately allow Britain to not just prevent diseases, but to do so before birth.

In effect this is a nod toward the selective breeding techniques at the core of eugenics.

This is the real agenda of the Tories.

Jill Chanter
Sheffield



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

We social housing residents are fighting the developers

WE LIVE in a social housing block of 30 flats in west London, and our residents’ association is fighting a development that is taking away our space.

Our housing association, Notting Hill Genesis, has been dealing with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine for the last five years.

But we had no clue.

Then in September last year, a small slip of paper came through our doors. It said could we move our cars because bicycle storage would be put in the space.

We were all stunned. Then cards started appearing on the cars saying please move or we will tow it. We didn’t even know who had

put them there. Now the housing association has leased part of our car park to the school.

We had around 14-16 spaces, now we have just four.

But the school has space just ten minutes’ away from it that it could use. And it has a cafe on the other side of the wall that is about the same size as the space that’s been taken from us.

The cafe is called Mary Seacole. She helped the poor and destitute. So they are using that to cloak themselves in the mantle of virtue while taking space away from poor people.

There are families with children in the flats. We had previously asked the housing association if

we could have a garden in some of the car park, as not all the spaces were being used.

The majority of us don’t have any space. So the car park was just a bit of respite for us all—it’s walled, and private. We’ve had barbecues and fetes there.

But we haven’t been listened to at all.

We found out that they’d asked a private block of flats nearby if they could use some of their space, and they flatly refused.

So if you have money, you get a say. If you’re poor and live in social housing flats you don’t get a choice.

Leonard Court Residents’ Association
Central London

Labour must stand up against Israeli eviction

ALL MAJOR political parties in Britain agree that Israel’s occupation of East Jerusalem is illegal.

So all MPs should oppose attempts by settler organisations to use Israeli courts to evict Palestinians.

Parliament’s Early Day Motion 529 “strongly condemns” attempts by the Jewish National Fund to evict the Sumarin family in East Jerusalem.

But when I counted, only 17 Labour MPs had signed.

Could this have something to do with Keir

Starmer’s politics? He has stated, “I support Zionism without qualification.”

Grassroots pressure must be put on all the MPs who have not signed. It is a nonsense to oppose annexation by Israel in theory, but not in practice.

On 30 June the court case to evict the Sumarin family will take place.

Take a picture with a sign, “No to the eviction of the Sumarins,” and send it to #dontevisitsumarin

Dick Pitt
Sheffield

Send solidarity to Brazilian movement

THE BRAZILIAN Landless Workers’ Movement (MST) is one of the most important movements in South America.

Its struggles for land rights for landless workers and peasants are closely linked to battles for a more sustainable agricultural system.

One of its strategies is to occupy disused land and train families to farm the land.

This is a direct challenge to big business.

Now a judge has granted an eviction order against 77 families living

on the Luiz Beltrame de Castro settlement in the state of Sao Paulo.

It is home to 250 people and produces sustainable food for teachers in the state education system.

The order came after Ivan Cassaro, one of Brazil’s wealthiest businessmen, and an ally of the right wing Bolsonaro government, challenged the ownership.

The MST has launched an international appeal for solidarity.

Please visit the campaign page, which

includes material in English and Portuguese, and forward their standard letter to the Brazilian court.

Go to bit.ly/MSTcall

Martin Empson
Manchester

Just a thought...

Slave traders still revered

I AGREE with Keith Pender that the monument to slave owner Henry Dundas in Edinburgh should be ripped down (Letters, 24 June).

Hammersmith in West London was founded by a slave trader—Sir Nicholas Crispe. He is “celebrated” in marble in a local church, St Paul’s.

He can be found in stained glass in Hammersmith library. There is a road named after him. And the Hammersmith coat of arms contains his symbol—three horseshoes.

Black lives matter? Not in Hammersmith.
Zekria Ibrahim
West London

Action helped beat Empire

IT’S IMPORTANT to note the crucial role played by workers in driving Britain out of southern Ireland (Socialist Worker, 24 June.)

Rail workers walked out and refused to carry British troops. There was a general strike against conscription, a strike by driver-employees against compulsory registration, and the declaration of the Limerick Soviet.

This is just some of the action that forced the British occupiers to the negotiating table in 1920.

Mike Killian
Manchester

Long-Bailey sacking fury

I WON’T be voting Labour until the right wingers that have hijacked the party have gone. I am 52 and I worry this will not be in my lifetime.

Paul Downes
On Facebook

●SO THE purges begin.
Malcolm Clive
On Facebook

●MIGHT AS well put a Tony Blair mask over his face. What a spineless snake of a man.

Tom Griffiths
On Facebook

●SIR KEIR doesn’t represent working people.

Andres Viveros
On Facebook

●LEFT THE party this evening.

Steve Chew
On Facebook

METING OUT MISERY

As coronavirus spreads through slaughterhouses in the US and Europe, **Simon Basketter** looks at how the drive for profit is to blame

CORONAVIRUS outbreaks have struck workers in meat processing plants around the world. But this is not about meat—it's about profit.

Globally meat plants have persistently been centres for outbreaks, with some of the biggest clusters in the US focused on slaughterhouses. The cases are due to poor working conditions and living quarters in a sector that is in a “disastrous race to the bottom”.

The Food and Environment Reporting Network (Fern) has been tracking the outbreaks. It says nearly tens of thousands of meat plant workers across the US and Europe have been infected with the virus and hundreds have died.

They include a chicken processing site in Anglesey, where over 150 workers were infected, and other plants in Wrexham and West Yorkshire.

Working conditions for migrants in German slaughterhouses are under the spotlight after more than 1,500 people caught the virus at one. The majority of those infected were Romanian and Bulgarian migrants living in shared housing.

This should come as no surprise.

“The entire sector is in a disastrous race to the bottom,” said Peter Schmidt of the German NGG food workers’ union. “It’s driven by the market and by consumer demand for cheap meat.

“The working conditions in these plants are the absolute worst—cold, close together, working at high speed.

“And the housing. When we were

looking at it, we found that people were having to share beds.

“You do a 12-hour shift and then you change over.”

US meat plants have been hit harder than European ones with at least 27,888 infections and 100 deaths by 25 June, according to Fern.

It is leading to a supply chain crisis.

A wave of mergers and acquisitions in the food industry from the 1980s onwards means a tiny number of large corporations dominate each link in the supply chain.

In recent years, meat packing bosses have successfully lobbied regulators in the US and Europe to increase line speeds.

Workers stand shoulder to shoulder. They have to cut and debone animals so quickly that they can’t pause long enough to cover a cough, much less go to the toilet, without carcasses passing them by.

Social distancing is virtually

“

US meat plants have been hit harder than European ones with 27,888 infections

MEAT INDUSTRY IS GRINDING DOWN ANIMALS AND WORKERS

A FEW large corporations dominating the meat industry means the supply chain is so brittle that a single plant closing can cause havoc.

The scale of the problem is at its worst in the US.

Some 90 percent of abattoirs process over one million animals a year. Four companies now process more than 80 percent of beef cattle in US, another four process 57 percent of the pigs.

A single processing plant in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, processes 5 percent of the pork that Americans eat.

When an outbreak of Covid-19 forced the state’s governor to shut that plant in April, pig farmers who use it were stranded.

Once pigs reach slaughter weight, there is a small window of time to have them killed. Farmers can’t afford to keep feeding them. And even if they could, they would no longer fit onto the production lines in abattoirs.

Much the

same is true for the hybrid industrial chickens. If allowed to live beyond six or seven weeks, they are susceptible to broken bones and heart problems and quickly become too large to hang on the disassembly line.

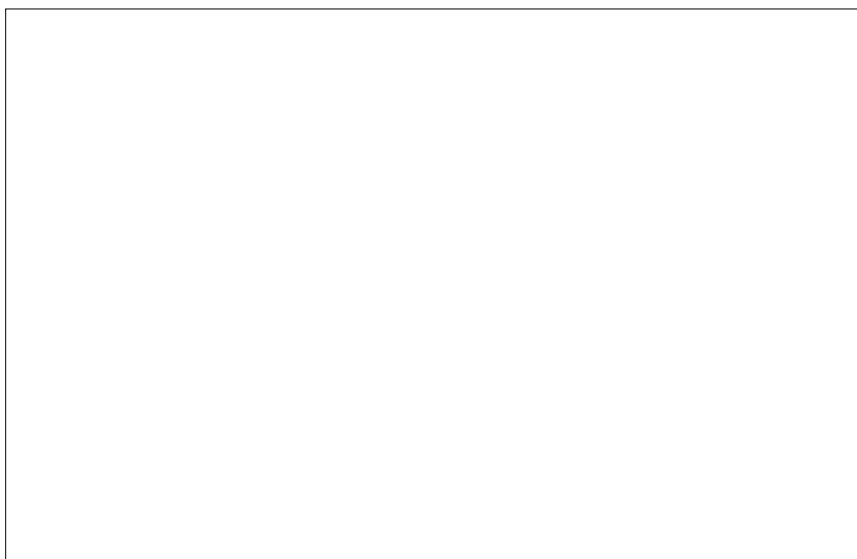
This is why farmers killed millions of animals when meat plants closed.

Protein

Under normal circumstances, the industrial pig or chicken is a marvel of capitalist production, bred to produce protein at warp speed when given the right food and drugs. They are made to maximise profit, rather than for pleasure or need.

So are the factories where they are killed and cut into parts—and they grind through workers at an alarming rate.

Meat production work is the most dangerous job in the US and that was before the virus.



impossible in a modern meat plant, making it an ideal environment for a virus to spread.

Some US chicken plant workers, given no regular toilet breaks, now wear nappies. In most plants a worker can ask for a break, but the machines are so loud they can’t be heard without speaking directly into the ear of a supervisor.

Until recently slaughterhouse workers had little or no access to personal protective equipment. Many of them were also encouraged to keep working even after exposure to the virus.

Add to this the fact that many meat plant workers are recent immigrants who live in crowded conditions and often

“

Until recently slaughterhouse workers had no access to PPE

have little or no access to health care. You have a population at dangerously high risk of infection.

When the number of Covid-19 cases in US slaughterhouses exploded in late April, public health officials and governors began ordering plants to close.

So on 26 April John Tyson, chairman of the US’s second-largest meat packer, Tyson Foods, took out ads in newspapers to declare that the food chain was “breaking”.

IN ORDER to reopen their production lines, Tyson and his fellow bosses wanted the federal government to step in and pre-empt local health authorities. They also needed liability protection, in case workers or unions sued them for failing to observe health and safety regulations.

President Donald Trump duly obliged bosses by invoking the Defence Production Act. After refusing to use the Act to boost production of coronavirus test kits, he declared industrial meat production a “scarce and critical material essential to the national defence”.

This took the decision to reopen or close meat plants out of local hands. It forced workers back to work without any mandatory safety precautions and offered employers protection from liability for their negligence.

So, for instance, Tyson reopened a meat packing plant in Waterloo, Iowa, where more than a thousand workers had tested positive for the virus.

These are men and women who

PROFITS COME FIRST

PEOPLE GET infected with coronavirus from droplets, which may be coughed, sneezed or exhaled by an infected person.

If you stick people close together for long periods of time, the virus will spread.

One factor in refrigerated workplaces is noisy machinery, which requires people to shout.

This can increase the spread of infected droplets. Cold temperatures and aggressive ventilation systems may also help spread the virus.

The meat industry relies on poor migrant labourers, who are often forced to share cramped accommodation and travel to work in company buses.

All the things that make meat processing work dangerous could easily be fixed—except for the pursuit of profit.

debone chicken carcasses that move down a line at 175 birds a minute.

The meat industry encompasses the boardrooms of some of the largest companies on the planet to killing floors with medieval working conditions.

Conditions for workers are barbaric. Most are paid low wages to work long hours in the cold and damp. The skilled workers are the boners. They generally finish their cutting life in the meat industry by their mid-thirties.

Boners work with a gauntlet and a long knife. They wear chainmail to protect their crotches.

The going rate for a boner who cuts themselves not to report the incident is a couple hundred dollars per stitch.

Most workers get paid the minimum wage—just.

The notion of being a key worker is a little hollow if you are grossly underpaid and your

THE LINES KEEP MOVING WHILE WORKERS DIE

GREELEY, Colorado, is home to JBS’s US headquarters and a massive plant that employs 6,000 workers.

JBS is a multinational with a revenue of £40 billion annually as the world’s largest meat processor.

In Greeley, every day workers herd 5,000 cattle onto the kill floor, where more workers stun, bleed out, dehide, dehair, gut and split the carcasses.

The hanging halves are chilled and aged.

Then a line of still more workers, standing along a snaking conveyor system, butchers each into individual cuts for packaging.

For eight hours each shift, workers stand elbow to elbow, pulling slabs of beef off a conveyor belt and swiftly trimming them into cuts. The repetitive, forceful motion takes a toll.

Workers say hands tingle at night, and fingers are curled and misshapen from holding a knife and hook all day.

Undocumented

Over half of the US meat house workforce are new immigrants. And roughly half of those immigrants are undocumented. Often they have limited English skills.

During the first virus outbreak, some 245 workers tested positive and six died at the plant. The company refused to offer tests to its line workers, and reopened after being closed for a week.

“These were already workplaces with impossibly high injury rates for people in close-quarter work,” says Darcy Tromanhauser of the Nebraska Appleseed migrants’ rights group.

“Now, there’s this new layer of risk to life”.

Hospitalised

JBS was made aware of the first positive case among its Greeley workers as early as 26 March. That day, the company gave employees 5 pounds of minced beef as a thank you for coming to work, and the plant continued to operate as normal.

As more workers were hospitalised and tested positive, fear began to spread.

On Monday 30 March, more than 800 employees walked off the job at the plant.

But the next morning the plant once again opened as usual, and JBS still had made no public acknowledgment of its cases.

Still the line continued to run. And workers began to die.

Since April unions have announced that they got £3 per hour pay increase for workers. So the lines kept moving.

Workers interviewed by Nebraska Appleseed reported that supervisors “are telling people that even if they are positive they can go to work”. They are told “to keep it on the down low” and “to not say anything or they will get fired”.

So the lines keep moving.

WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties.

We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7840 5602 for more information

Socialist Workers Party online meetings

Racism, coronavirus and climate change—socialism in a time of crisis and revolt

MANCHESTER, LIVERPOOL AND THE NORTH WEST
Wed 8 Jul, 7pm
817-4647-8183

SCOTLAND
Thu 9 Jul, 6.30pm
823-0890-7743

SOUTH LONDON
Wed 15 Jul, 7pm
497-196-1801



The Socialist Workers Party is holding online meetings during the coronavirus crisis. This is to ensure that there can still be collective local discussion, organising and actions.

Most of the meetings will be held using the Zoom system. Download the Zoom app onto your phone or computer and at the time given for your local meeting ask to "Join a meeting".

You can then enter the number printed on this page for the appropriate meeting. **The password for all meetings is 967537.**

Make sure you look at the SWP Facebook page facebook.com/SocialistWorkersParty for news of national online meetings and other updates.

BIRMINGHAM
By any means necessary — the revolutionary legacy of Malcolm X
Wed 8 July, 7pm
281-634-5938

BLACK COUNTRY
After the sacking of Rebecca Long-Bailey — Starmer, Palestine and Labour's shift to the right
Wed 8 July, 8pm
352-891-2411

BRADFORD
Is another education possible?
Thu 9 July, 7pm
890-3576-9599

BRIGHTON AND HOVE
Coronavirus and the Global South
Thu 9 July, 6.30pm
889-9658-1654

BRISTOL
Why an attack on trans rights is an attack on us all
Thu 9 July, 7.30pm
688-397-3148

CAMBRIDGE
Lenin at 150 — why his ideas still matter
Thu 9 July, 6pm
681-800-4408

CARDIFF
After the sacking of Rebecca Long-Bailey — Starmer, Palestine and Labour's shift to the right
Wed 8 July, 7pm
630-181-4857

CHESTERFIELD
The revolutionary ideas of Angela Davis
Thu 9 July, 6.30pm
829-532-8731

COLCHESTER
How the Black Panthers fought the state
Thu 30 July, 7pm
872-3074-2363

COVENTRY
Martin Luther King — non-violence and civil disobedience
Wed 8 July, 7.30pm
587-183-5359

EDINBURGH
Where does racism come from?
Wed 8 July, 7.30pm
431-459-112

HARLOW
After the sacking of Rebecca Long-Bailey — Starmer, Palestine and Labour's shift to the right
Thu 16 July, 7.30pm
832-8746-7480

HUDDERSFIELD
Is science neutral?
Thu 9 July, 6.30pm
428-926-9492

KENT
Can the economy recover after the pandemic?
Thu 9 July, 8.15pm
434-623-8064

LEEDS
After the sacking of Rebecca Long-Bailey — Starmer, Palestine and Labour's shift to the right
Thu 9 July, 6.30pm
856-912-7408

LONDON:HACKNEY
Lenin at 150 — why his ideas still matter
Thu 9 July, 7.30pm
798-534-2585

LONDON:HARINGEY
Where does racism come from?
Wed 8 July, 7.30pm
459-388-1576

LONDON:ISLINGTON
Anger to revolution — what makes people rise up?
Thu 9 July, 6.30pm
874-012-7970

LONDON:NEWHAM
Fake news and alternative facts — who controls the media?
Wed 8 July, 7.30pm
811-4659-1877

LONDON:SOUTH
After the sacking of Rebecca Long-Bailey — Starmer, Palestine and Labour's shift to the right
Wed 8 July, 7pm
497-196-1801

LONDON:SOUTH EAST
The US and coronavirus — where now for the US left?
Wed 8 July, 7.30pm
530-913-6390

LONDON:TOWER HAMLETS
The legacy of the Haitian revolution
Wed 8 July, 7.30pm
818-391-0420

LONDON:WALTHAM FOREST
From Pride to #BlackLivesMatter — why protests work
Wed 8 July, 7.30pm
543-023-057

LONDON:WEST AND NORTH WEST
All the statues should fall — confronting the legacy of slavery and empire
Thu 9 July, 6pm
731-479-3555

MANCHESTER
Why the attack on trans rights is an attack on us all
Wed 15 July, 7pm
843-1743-1470

NEWCASTLE
Booklaunch: Transgender Resistance, Socialism and the Fight for Trans Liberation
with author Laura Miles
Wed 8 July, 7pm
368-595-7212

NORWICH
All the statues should fall — confronting the legacy of slavery and empire
Wed 8 July, 7.30pm
906-652-5299

NOTTINGHAM AND DERBY
The revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx
Wed 8 July, 7pm
354-874-4790

OXFORD
Why are the police so racist?
Thu 9 July, 6.30pm
813-7210-8579

PORTSMOUTH
Is another education possible?
Wed 8 July, 7.30pm
488-934-2809

SHEFFIELD AND SOUTH YORKSHIRE
Fake news and alternative facts — who controls the media?
Thu 9 July, 7pm
529-174-9278

SOUTHAMPTON
After the sacking of Rebecca Long-Bailey — Starmer, Palestine and Labour's shift to the right
Wed 8 July, 7.30pm
381-513-5080

SWANSEA
Who were the Black Panther Party?
Weds 8 July, 7.30pm
248-448-3170

YORK AND SCARBOROUGH
All the statues should fall — confronting the legacy of slavery and empire
Wed 8 July, 7.30pm
827-489-7492

CONTACT THE SWP

Phone 020 7840 5600
Email enquires@swp.org.uk
Post PO Box 74955
London E16 9EJ

BOOKMARKS the socialist bookshop



The Labour Party — A Marxist History
by Tony Cliff, Donny Gluckstein and Charlie Kimber, £14.99



A Rebel's Guide to Engels
by Camilla Royle
£4



Hegel and Revolution
by Terry Sullivan and Donny Gluckstein, £7



Transgender Resistance
by Laura Miles
£10

1 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3QE PHONE 020 7637 1848 WEB bookmarksbookshop.co.uk

Wasp Network is a solid Cuban political spy thriller

This film on Netflix tells a little known story of US state-sponsored terror without romanticising Cuba's Castro government, writes **Julia Ryder**

WASP NETWORK is a spy film with a sting, set amid the sun, squalor and vice of Cuba and Miami in the 1990s.

It is based on a true story—and neither centrist dads nor the left's professional Cuba-lovers will be happy with how it's told.

Two Cuban pilots, Rene Gonzalez and Juan Pablo Roque, escape the island. Rene steals a biplane and flies to Florida. The dashing airforce major Juan swims to US-occupied Guantanamo Bay and defects.

Rene's wife Olga (Penelope Cruz) soon gets a knock on the door from the Cuban police.

She struggles with austerity, food shortages and power cuts—and how to hide from their daughter that Rene is a traitor.

This is one of *Wasp Network*'s strengths. Sensitive scenes and well-crafted dialogue focus on the personal toll on the various characters.

There isn't a straightforward "good guy" versus "bad guy" narrative. Although you can't help but think, "Gotcha, yankee," when a Cuban jet shoots down three exile planes that try to drop leaflets over Havana.

The film is set in the middle of Cuba's "special period" as refugees try to leave on makeshift rafts, and social unrest bubbles away.

In 1959 a nationalist revolution, led by Fidel Castro, overthrew US-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista. The super-rich, casino owners, gangsters and bosses fled to Miami where they plotted their revenge.

Facing US sanctions, invasion threats and isolation, Castro and the new ruling group tied itself to Stalinist Russia. Its collapse in 1991, had devastating consequences for Cubans.

Refreshingly, *Wasp Network* shows the protests and riots of August 1994. Ordinary Cubans get a brief look-in, rather than it just being a choice between sticking with Castro or the Batista-loving bandits in Miami.

When Rene and Juan get to the US, they immerse themselves in the world of Cuban emigre politics and drug-running.

The Miami groups hope to cripple the Cuban economy through terrorist plots on tourist resorts.

In 1997 CIA spook and Cuban exile Luis Posada Carriles (Tony Plana) hires the unwitting Raul Cruz Leon to plant bombs. Leon is caught and dozens of other plots are foiled.

Rene and Juan's precise role in all this isn't all it seems at first.

The change of pace when the twist is revealed around halfway through could have been far smoother.

But it's a good film about a little known chapter in history.

Available now on Netflix



THE BIOSPHERIANS prepare to begin their experiment

Spaceship Earth doesn't quite take off

DOCUMENTARY

SPACESHIP EARTH

Released on streaming platforms on Friday 10 July.

Go to spaceshipearthfilm.co.uk for details

IT'S 1991 in the semi-arid climate of Oracle, Arizona. Eight "Biospherians" begin a two year long expedition into the possibilities of maintaining life in an entirely closed ecological system.

Their ambition is that one day humans could establish a colony on Mars.

In Biosphere 2—a 3.14 acre self-regulating greenhouse—they grow their own food, care for livestock and run scientific studies.

The film begins with the introduction of the founding members. They're a mixed group of avant-garde performers, engineers and bohemian

professionals whose projects range from boat building to theatrical shows.

The biosphere opens to a fanfare of media attention, as the team—clad in sci-fi-esque boiler suits—wave goodbye. But as the experiment progresses, we see what appears to be a quick deterioration in the environmental conditions, as well as the relationships and health among the biospherians.

Both they and the audience outside begin to question the scientific credibility of the project. Wildlife begins to die off, and it is revealed that extra oxygen is pumped into the system.

At this point the film begins to feel like a series of Big Brother set inside the Eden Project. But the documentary has a contradiction which runs implicitly throughout.

From the New Mexico commune where the founding

members created their first ecovillage, to the Biosphere 2, there is the constant presence of Ed Bass.

He's the man who finances the group's plans, and whose family made their fortune from oil. You would think this stark contradiction would be explored in much greater depth.

But this relationship is played out on the sidelines.

No connection is made between the source of the project's funds and the life-preserving ambitions of the biospherians.

In an era of impending ecological disaster and the race to privatise space, *Spaceship Earth* ignores the more interesting dynamic of fossil fuel funded eco-projects.

Instead it provides an uninspiring account of a story which never fully manifests on screen.

Blythe Taylor

FILMS

BLACK STORIES

Films available to stream for a fee at player.bfi.org.uk

THE BRITISH Film institute has drawn together a number of films on its BFI Player into a new collection—Black Stories.

They include *Harriet*—the 2019 film about the life of liberated slave and freedom fighter Harriet Tubman.

Born into slavery, Tubman escaped the US South and travelled alone over 100 miles on foot to the first free state, Philadelphia.

She returned as a fugitive over 13 times helping more



Harriet

than 70 people escape.

The collection also features a documentary about the life of writer and Civil Rights activist James Baldwin.

The film, *I Am Not Your Negro*, is based on an unfinished manuscript of a book Baldwin was unable to complete before his death.

The work, *Remember This House*, recounts the lives and assassinations of Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King.

Then there's British film *Bullet Boy*. Ricky is released from prison, but soon



Bullet Boy

finds himself drawn back into crime while trying to protect his brother from the advances of a local gang.

When director Saul Dibbs spoke to *Socialist Worker* in 2005 he said he wanted to "humanise" the issue of gang violence, "to say this is happening to ordinary people."

"If you look around the country the issue of people with guns goes across all races. It's got much more to do with people who feel excluded, or haven't got much vested interest in society. The people who get involved in this kind of thing feel that they haven't got that much to lose."

WHAT DO you make of the government's moves toward ending the lockdown?

RH: THEY ARE trying to exit lockdown at a moment when there are still a very high number of infections every day.

The most reliable data suggests that there are something over 3,500 new infections a day across Britain.

That's a very high number.

And so to exit lockdown and see people in the streets going about their normal business when you've got that amount of virus in the community is super dangerous.

It's even more dangerous when you don't have a test, trace and isolate system that's fully functioning.

We are rolling the dice and gambling with people's lives.

And to me, that is an extraordinarily reckless policy.

WHY DO you think that Britain was so badly prepared for a pandemic, given the government's own reports had issued warnings as far back as 2016?

RH: THERE WERE two principal reasons. First is that they assumed the pandemic was going to be influenza, which although an unpleasant disease, has a relatively low death rate and is something that happens every year.

What our scientists and politicians did not think about was the possibility of an epidemic similar to the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome of 2003.

A second issue is that there was a general disbelief of the evidence coming out of China.

There was a scepticism that medicine in Chinese could deal effectively with an epidemic like this, and a degree of racism against China.

The evidence for that is the five papers from Chinese scientists that we published in The Lancet in the last week of January.

They laid out clearly the threat—and described the urgency of getting PPE, test, trace and isolate systems, intensive care capacity and health systems ready for the epidemic.

So there is no excuse for British politicians or scientists to say that this was a surprise.

I can only conclude that when our scientists read those papers, they simply didn't believe them.

That's why this charge of racism against Chinese scientists has to be seriously considered.

A COVID ward in New York that has been hit hard by the virus

THE SYSTEM HAS FAILED

Richard Horton, the longstanding editor of the medical journal The Lancet, is scathing about the establishment's handling of the coronavirus.

Richard Horton

WAS THIS a failure of individuals or something wider?

RH: I THINK there was a systemic failure. We have a very complicated set of scientific committees giving advice to government, and all contain excellent individuals. But when the system came together it failed, and it failed catastrophically.

If you read [Chinese medical] papers like that in a scientific journal, you

would think they would have immediately contacted those individuals in China and asked, what is going on?

Asked, can you confirm the severity of this?

And if they had done so, they would have got a clear message back, that this was a brand new virus.

That it was tipping thousands of people into hospitals and intensive care units. There was no treatment. There was human to human

transmission and there was a mortality rate much higher than for influenza.

If we'd asked those questions, if we'd read those papers, we would not have waited till 23 March to lock down Britain.

HOW DID the previous ten years of austerity play into the crisis?

RH: THERE ARE two parts to that. First, the National Health Service. Although its funding has increased, it's barely increased enough to be sustainable. And that means that it was not a resilient health service.

The only way it could cope with a pandemic was to throw over 30,000 patients out of hospital and to pretty much shut down routine care.

Second, an even more appalling story is the fact that we've had over a billion pounds taken out of the public health system over the last decade.

We now have no local public health service of any capacity or credibility. And that's why we're in this ludicrous position where we are building a test, trace and isolate system from scratch. And, we've outsourced it to Serco. How wrong is that?

GIVEN THE economic costs of these epidemics, why do you think there's such political resistance to spending on public health?

RH: WE'VE BEEN living through 40 years of a neoliberal ideology which is all about the intensification of markets as the solution to every social problem.

In the DNA of neoliberalism is the idea that the state is evil and has to be cut back and we should instead be outsourcing to the market.

Now that 40-year ideology, which goes back to Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, has been shown by Covid-19 to be corrupt.

It has left us vulnerable to the most appalling human catastrophe since the Second World War.

And it's no coincidence that the two countries that have seen some of the worst mortality rates, and which have handled this epidemic in the worst possible way, are the two countries that have championed neoliberalism. These are the United States and Britain.

And so I hope that one of the lessons of this will be that we need a mass movement of resistance to say that enough is enough.

WHY DID some scientists aid politicians pushing a 'herd immunity' strategy?

RH: BECAUSE ALL of the scientists' models of the pandemic were based on the coming pandemic

being influenza when they plugged-in mortality rates and expectations of severe illness, they got out figures which were relatively manageable—and that was the message communicated to politicians.

That's why you had Boris Johnson talking about, "Take it on the chin!"

I don't think that's a defensible position for either the scientists or for the politicians. If you're a politician, it's not a question of just taking what scientists say and then not questioning it.

We have an embassy in Beijing. Would you not expect the foreign minister to have contacted the embassy to provide an assessment of what was actually taking place in Wuhan and other Chinese cities?

There was this strange collusion between the scientists and the politicians who acted together apparently to protect the government.

We had a situation where medical officers and scientific advisers were appearing at press conferences defending the government line, which was wholly inappropriate for independent advisers.

WHAT ABOUT the way the pandemic impacted on the poor and disadvantaged?

RH: THIS PANDEMIC held a mirror up to society. It has accentuated and exploited every inequality in society.

I don't think we ever thought before about the notion of a key worker. But as some of us have been able to work at home, society has only been able to continue thanks to some of the lowest paid workers in our communities going to work.

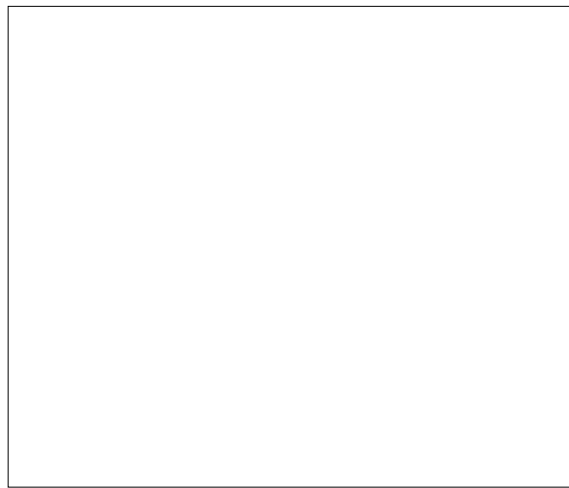
And what was worse was that they were not protected. The inequalities in society have been cruelly exposed, especially for the black and minority ethnic population.

Where were the policies to protect these vulnerable key workers?

Never before have people been so cruelly exposed and yet so taken for granted in our society.

WHAT HAS to be done now to prepare for a second wave?

RH: WE HAVE to remember that over 40,000 people have died, and that's a minimum figure, and they didn't need to die.



Workers decontaminate the streets of Wuhan (top) Boris Johnson and politicians didn't heed warnings (above)

So first and foremost, we have to protect those vulnerable groups and I have not heard that anybody in government is coming to talk about a plan to protect them.

We also have to build health systems that truly can protect the public.

Security isn't about having nuclear weapons travelling around the British Isles in submarines.

Security starts with an effective system of social and health protection—and clearly we still don't have that.

We need a national conversation about what kind of society we want to live in.

We really have to end this exploitation and using the markets as the magic bullet to solve every social problem.

I hope that there will be a politician to have the courage to ask that question and lead a national conversation on it.

Otherwise, we will not have learned the lessons of this terrible pandemic.

READ MORE

● **The Covid-19 Catastrophe: What's Gone Wrong and How to Stop It Happening Again** by Richard Horton, £12.99

● **Politics and pandemics, Covid, class and health** by Lee Humber £3

Socialism in a time of pandemics by Joseph Choonara go to bit.ly/isjpdemic
Available at Bookmarks, the socialistbookshop. Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to bookmarksbookshop.co.uk



COMMENT

New war threats as foreign forces fight over Libya

A battle for control is brewing across Libya. Nick Clark looks at the background to the powers' interventions



Soldiers fighting for Khalifa Haftar prepare for battle

LIBYA SITS between two of the African countries worst hit by coronavirus, Egypt and Algeria.

It is in the sixth year of its second civil war in a decade.

It is the place from which tens of thousands of refugees a year attempt a dangerous sea crossing to Europe. And it is the site of a modern-day slave trade that has grown off the back of their desperation.

But none of this is what's driving competing international governments to argue over the future of Libya's government.

Instead they're threatening to plunge Libya into even deeper chaos as they fight over who gets to control its land, sea and fossil fuels.

Clashing

In the past month two major military powers have come close to clashing over Libyan land.

Turkey—the country with the second largest military in the US-dominated Nato alliance—joined the Libyan civil war in January this year.

Its advances in June prompted Egypt—another heavily armed US ally—to threaten to join in on the other side.

Each was backed up by more Nato allies—Italy for Turkey, and France and Greece for Egypt.

It's a dangerous and often confusing situation. But at the root of it is simple capitalist competition that has torn apart the lives of millions of ordinary people.

When the Arab revolutions of 2010 and 2011 began to overthrow and threaten dictators—many of them US allies—Western states rushed to take control.

Countries that had courted L. ibyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi for his oil—chief among them Britain—suddenly claimed to back democracy.

They helped to turn the Libyan revolt into a

civil war, backing their chosen militias with arms, funding and SAS soldiers.

After Gaddafi was overthrown and killed, Western states manufactured an interim government without the involvement of ordinary Libyans.

It had no real support, but they hoped it would be loyal to Western governments and give them access to Libya's oil.

Nevertheless, when the Libyan government broke down and civil war began again in 2014, those same states were quick to ditch it.

The Government of National Accord (GNA), as it is now known, is officially backed by the United Nations security council.

This includes Britain, the US, Russia and France.

That hasn't stopped any of them supporting, tacitly and openly, the GNA's opponent Khalifa Haftar.

Haftar, a former Gaddafi general-turned CIA asset, controls most of Libya

including oil fields where British and French fossil fuel

firms BP and Total operate.

He is also backed by other Western allies in the Middle East including Egypt, Israel and the UAE in a struggle for regional dominance against Turkey.

Egypt, Israel and Turkey are embroiled in a standoff over who gets access to gas fields in the Eastern Mediterranean, off the coast of Cyprus.

The battle isn't just economic. Whoever controls the gas gets to dominate a strategically important area of the Middle East.

Pipeline

Israel, Egypt, Greece and Cyprus agreed to divide up the gas fields and cooperate in building a pipeline to transfer it to Europe.

The deal deliberately excluded their shared rival Turkey. So Turkey and Libya's GNA agreed the rights to an area of the Mediterranean that block the plans for a pipeline.

Turkey sent soldiers—including fighters it backed in the Syrian civil war—to fight against Haftar on behalf of the GNA.

With Turkey's help, the GNA began to break out of its tiny enclave and push back Haftar.

And that's when Egypt threatened to join in the fight.

In this high stakes game, the biggest losers are always ordinary people.

Competing capitalist states have already torn up Libya once and thrown it into chaos.

Now they're doing it again.

Whoever controls the gas gets to dominate a strategically important area

KWAME NKUMAH

Learn from militant fight against imperialism

by TOMÁS TENGELY-EVANS

IN 1945 Kwame Nkrumah was one of only 100 people who gathered at the Pan-African Congress in Manchester to plan the end of empire.

Twelve years later he was the first president of a free Ghana, one of the first African countries to gain independence from the British Empire.

Nkrumah was born in 1909 to a very poor family in the Gold Coast, as British-ruled Ghana was known.

But through a Catholic charity, the young Nkrumah got to go to school and later became a teacher.

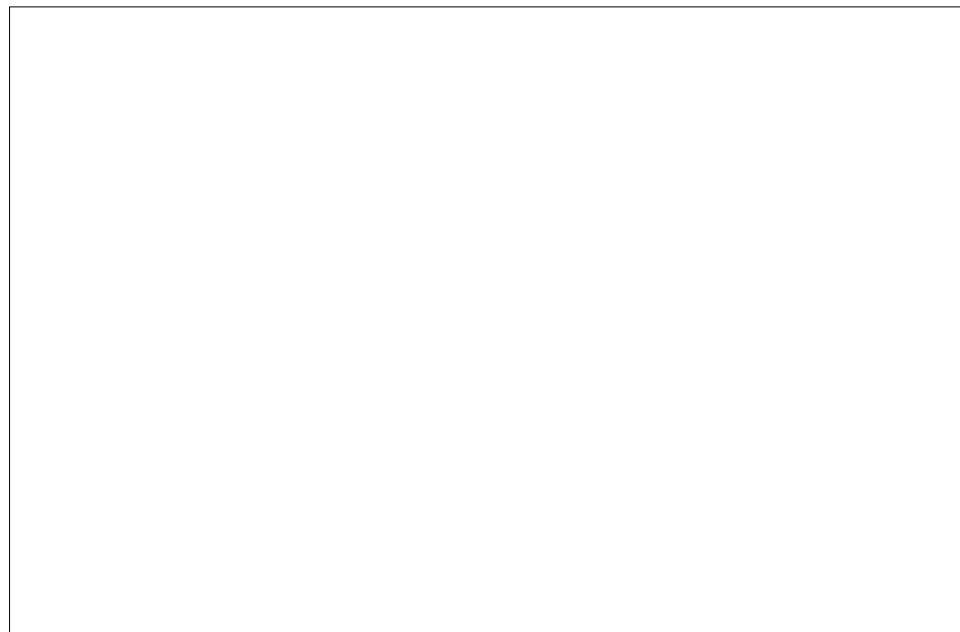
He learned about radicals such as W.E.B. Du Bois, who shaped his ideas of socialism and African liberation.

Debates

In 1935 Nkrumah arrived to study in the US, where he threw himself into activism and political debates about how to liberate Africa.

He urged for a Pan Africanism against all colonial domination.

His thinking was a militant break from the politics that



THE KWAME Nkrumah Mausoleum and memorial park in Accra, Ghana

had dominated the opposition in the Gold Coast.

Various privileged groups had petitioned the British administration for more rights.

Indeed, when Nkrumah returned to Ghana in 1947, he was worried to “associate myself with a movement backed almost entirely by

reactionaries, middle class lawyers and merchants”.

The situation changed when resistance erupted in 1948. Second World War veterans had triggered a boycott of European businesses, and riots spread across the country.

Nkrumah and his new

Convention People’s Party (CPP) mobilised workers, peasants and the poor into a struggle against imperialism.

In January 1950, the CPP and the TUC union federation began what they called “Positive Action”. The general strike broke the back of British colonial rule and

inspired millions. On independence night in the capital Accra, Nkrumah declared, “The independence of Ghana is meaningless until it is linked with the total liberation of Africa.”

Celebrate

US Civil Rights leaders, including Martin Luther King, travelled to Ghana to discuss the fight for freedom.

Western politicians, fearful of the implications of a free Africa, also joined the official independence do in Accra.

Racist US vice president and future president Richard Nixon, is said to have gone up to groups of black people. He patronisingly asked, “How does it feel to be free, son?” thinking them Ghanaian.

“I wouldn’t know,” one replied, “I’m from Alabama.”

What happened to the hopes of an Africa free of imperialism?

The West ramped up economic pressure to force Nkrumah to abandon progressive policies. And in 1966 Nkrumah was overthrown in a CIA-backed coup. There was little mass opposition. Nkrumah’s

politics, which once mobilised the masses, had demobilised them after independence.

His vision of socialism was one brought from above. Through African unity, he argued, new states could have national development free from imperial domination.

This meant subordinating workers’ demands to a new “national interest” of African development.

In 1961 the TUC organised another general strike. The Nkrumah government repressed the movement, jailing trade unionists for “subversion”.

This proved fatal to blocking imperialist powers from reasserting control.

Despite such limitations, we should learn from Nkrumah’s militancy to fight for “total liberation”—from racism, imperialism and the capitalist system that produces them.

This is part of a series about radical black lives Go to bit.ly/SWBlackLives

More online
The life of Fannie Lou Hamer
bit.ly/fannie-lou-hamer

JOIN THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

- ☐ Yes, I'd like to be a member
☐ I'd like more information and to receive emails

Name
Address
.....
Postcode
Phone
Email

Return to SWP membership department, PO Box 74955
London E16 9EJ. Phone 020 7840 5602
Email membership@swp.org.uk



Subscribe to Socialist Worker

Have Socialist Worker delivered with your post every week for a direct debit of £5 a month

I want to subscribe to Socialist Worker with a monthly direct debit of £5

Name

Address.....

Postcode

E-mail

Phone

I would like ____ extra papers to sell
(this will not be deducted from my bank account)

For official use only—this is not part of the instructions to your bank/building society

Sherborne Publications,
PO Box 74955 London E16 9EJ

Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by direct debit

Originator identification no. 9 7 3 3 5 5

Our reference no.

.....

1. Name and full postal address of your bank or building society

To the manager:

Bank/building society

Address

Postcode

2. Name(s) of account holder(s)

.....

3. Branch sort code / /

4. Bank/building society account no.

5. Instruction to your bank or building society
Please pay Sherborne Publications direct debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the direct debit guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Sherborne Publications and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank or building society.

Signature(s)

Date

Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions from some types of account



Direct debit guarantee

■ This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.

■ If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit Sherborne Publications will notify you ten working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request Sherborne Publications to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.

■ If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit by Sherborne Publications or your bank or building society you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.

■ If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when Sherborne Publications asks you to.

■ You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

Socialist Worker Subscriptions

Post PO Box 74955 London E16 9EJ
Phone 020 7840 5601
Web www.socialistworker.co.uk

Tories ignore warnings to take action on the climate

A report from the government's Committee on Climate Change is yet another urgent alarm bell. But the Tories don't want to hear it, says Sarah Bates

THE GOVERNMENT has been told to use a "once in a lifetime opportunity" to stop catastrophic climate change, in a damning new report.

Government body the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) warned in its annual parliamentary report last week that the Tories aren't taking the action needed to halt climate and ecological chaos.

It said the cabinet committee on climate change had only met once since Boris Johnson took personal charge of the issue in October last year.

The CCC is calling for an outlook from the government that considers both the economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and puts in place a "green stimulus".

Lord Deben, the committee's chair, said that Britain "is facing its biggest economic shock for a generation".

"We have a once in a lifetime opportunity to address these urgent challenges together—it's there for the taking," he said.

Window

Deben, who last year complained the running of the government's climate change efforts was "like Dad's Army", said the "window of opportunity is closing already" for a green recovery.

And the report also calls for wide-ranging measures including energy efficient homes, schemes for cycling and walking, tree planting and restoring peatland.

Other priorities include increasing recycling, banning landfill sites, and redeploying workers in oil and gas companies into services that capture and store carbon emissions.

Extinction Rebellion activists marched from the Treasury

to Downing Street in London last Thursday to demand urgent action from the government.

Alanna Byrne from the direct action group said, "The government's lack of action on this should terrify everyone."

"Their absolute incompetence and unwillingness to do what's in the best interest of people's safety is astounding."

"I don't know what else we can do now other than come out on the street and take our own action."

While politicians and advisers twiddle their thumbs over targets decades away, the global crisis of climate change is accelerating.

The seven hottest years on record have all occurred in the past decade—and temperature rises are taking place alongside a growing picture of extreme weather.

In the Arctic, record-breaking temperatures swept through Siberia over the last week. The town of Verkhoyansk recorded its highest ever temperature of 38 degrees.

And in Spain, vicious hail storms have battered the Iberian region, destroying crops just before they were due to be harvested.

Action by climate rebels and school strikers over the last two years show that pressure can be bought on the climate change delayers and deniers at the top of society.

More resistance by wider layers of people will be needed to push through the revolutionary change more desperately needed now than ever before.

Fails to capture the potential

THE report's emphasis on carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology relies on the myths pushed by fossil fuel interests and the hopes of governments that support them.

At present, technology only exists to capture carbon from the atmosphere and neutralise it on a very small scale.

There aren't initiatives that can neutralise the carbon already in the atmosphere on anything like the scale needed to make Britain carbon neutral.

It's much safer to stop industrial burning of fossil fuels rather than hope the technology can be developed to capture and store them at a later date.

Four degree rise too high

THE CCC is recommending that the government "demonstrate adaptation planning for a minimum 2 degree and consideration of a 4 degree global temperature rise".

But a 4 degree rise would mean unprecedented heatwaves, severe drought and major floods.

The heat rise will make much of Earth's land mass uninhabitable and sea levels could rise by two metres or more, engulfing low lying island communities.

This isn't a prospect far off in the future. The World Bank estimated in 2012 that 4 degree warming could occur as early as the 2060s.

Bailouts soar to billions for airline and auto bosses

A CENTRAL demand from the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) is that the government speed up moves to cut greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.

It's been one year since then-prime minister Theresa May signed into law a target of hitting net zero emissions by 2050.

That means a level where much lower emissions are offset by technology that captures carbon or by "carbon sinks" such as forests,

which can absorb carbon.

Yet the government is on track to miss a deadline that is already decades too late to avoid climate catastrophe.

John Sauven, Greenpeace UK executive director, said, "The practical measures taken by the government over the past 12 months add up to a tiny fraction of what is needed to keep us on course to meet that commitment."

Transformational changes would be needed to decarbonise Britain in

anything near the time the Tories are claiming.

Yet instead of radically changing the energy, manufacturing and transport sectors, the Tory government is pumping money into keeping them afloat.

It has spent billions of pounds bailing out airlines, car manufacturers and oil firms that are suffering under the effects of the coronavirus.

Honda, Nissan and Toyota have received over £1 billion between

them from the Bank of England coronavirus fund. And British Airways, EasyJet, Wizz Air and Ryanair also grabbed handouts.

Oilfield service company Baker Hughes took £600 million while competitor Schlumberger received £150 million.

The CCC recommended that any bailouts of polluting industries must have "green strings" attached. The hope is to encourage firms to become more environmentally friendly.

It is not enough simply to attach environmental conditions to companies belching out carbon on an industrial scale.

They should be stripped of this money.

The funds should be poured into creating well paid, unionised jobs in a publicly owned and democratically run green sector.

Real progress on greenhouse gas levels won't come from private firms that fight for the interests of profit, not planet.

Connect the struggles

CLIMATE strike figurehead Greta Thunberg has stepped up her calls for radical change. She argues movements such as Me Too, Black Lives Matter and the school strikes are "interconnected".

"We can no longer look away from what our society has been ignoring for so long, whether it is equality, justice or sustainability,"

ROUNDUP

Bosses couldn't drive out Paul Williams

BOSSSES AT the Driving and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) have backed off from an attempt to victimise leading trade unionist Paul Williams.

The PCS union says DVSA bosses have dropped threats to make him redundant.

DVSA bosses have spent years trying to get rid of Paul, first launching a grievance against him in 2016, which they were eventually forced to drop in August 2018.

Yet in July that year they announced a "reorganisation" in Paul's workplace that put him at risk of redundancy in February last year.

Paul has applied for 23 jobs in DVSA over the past year but has been repeatedly blocked or rejected.

He says recent job offers have involved demands that he reduce his facility time, and even that he must agree to hold no union posts or positions.

But now after pressure from the PCS, Paul has been given a new position with no threat of redundancy.

Sanctions restart for benefit claimants

SANCTIONS FOR people on the hated Universal Credit benefit were set to restart from Wednesday of this week.

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) bosses were gearing up to reintroduce the sanctions regime as part of a drive to reopen job centres.

That means that the millions of people who started claiming Universal Credit during the outbreak will be put at the mercy of the cruel regime.

Sanctions for claimants were suspended at the end of March to cope with a huge increase in applications for Universal Credit.

Millions of people applied as bosses sacked or laid workers off as they shut down.

The DWP was forced to suspend stringent checks and the "claimant commitment" that means people have to show they're looking for work.

But now bosses want to reintroduce these as part of a drive to get back to business as usual.

The coronavirus crisis has shown that sanctions can be scrapped.

The Tories mustn't be allowed to reintroduce them.

Join the Disabled People Against Cuts (Dpac) day of action on 1 July. Go to <https://bit.ly/DPACDayofAction> for details

University workers fight a wave of new attacks

by SADIE ROBINSON

UCU UNION members in universities and colleges across Britain are fighting a swathe of attacks on jobs and pay.

More than 500 people joined a virtual rally on Thursday of last week, called by union members in four branches.

It took place as other workers held a socially-distanced protest outside the bosses' headquarters in central London.

Workers described how they are organising to resist cuts.

Sandy, Unison union branch secretary at Soas, said planned cuts threatened one in four support staff. "Our branch meeting last week unanimously voted to start balloting for industrial action," he said.

Linda, the chair of the UCU at Roehampton university, said bosses there want to make cuts of £4.5 billion.

"Staff were sent letters asking them to take a voluntary pay cut," she said. "Staff are quite angry. This is going to impact on people who have been disadvantaged—BME workers, women, disabled staff."

She said UCU members want to take industrial action if the issue isn't resolved.

Redundancies

And at Croydon College, UCU members have voted in favour of strikes if bosses push through any compulsory redundancies.

Many workers described plans for savage cuts.

At Reading university, bosses want workers to agree voluntary cuts of 20 percent and job cuts of up to 500 full time equivalent posts. President of Reading UCU Deepa warned, "The university has a nuclear option which is to fire all of us and rehire us on inferior terms."

UCU president Vicky Blake said bosses were using the "cover of the pandemic" to push through attacks.

But she said the real problem is the "marketised model of education".

"We have to coordinate resistance," she said. "Every institution that is hit by cuts is going to be engaged in a local battle. But we have to see those battles as part of a coordinated attack on our sector as a whole."

"We're only going to get through this if we all stick together. All of these battles are part of a war that is being waged on education."

UCU general secretary Jo Grady failed to attend the rally, instead sending a video message.

Peter from South Thames College group said he was "disappointed



THE UCU union held a protest outside bosses' HQ last week

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

that our union nationally is not doing more to support this".

"The general secretary has come on with a video clip," he said. "We deserve more than that."

Resisting attacks on jobs, pay

and education will have to come from the bottom up. Grassroots organising can also put pressure on the national union to do more.

Roddy from Imperial College London said, "If our union just

lifted its little finger, we would be able to do a hell of a lot better.

"We can score a victory if we can mobilise the resources of our union behind every branch facing attacks."

Royal Mail walkout over coronavirus fears

ROYAL MAIL postal workers in Barnsley, South Yorkshire, left their workplace last week over coronavirus safety fears.

The members of the CWU union took action after a number of workers tested positive for Covid-19.

They didn't go back to work until managers had arranged a deep clean of the building. Dozens of workers gathered at the gates for hours while union reps held discussions with management.

Local news website Yorkshire Live reported that some workers complained that managers hadn't made it compulsory to wear face masks at work. Others said they had arranged personal



A CWU union gate meeting in February

return to work until they go their results.

The incident is the latest in a series of walkouts and decisions to leave the workplace on safety grounds by CWU members.

Top bosses decided in the early stages of the coronavirus outbreak that Royal Mail should continue with "business as usual".

CWU South Yorkshire area rep Mick Dunlavy told Socialist Worker union members were now back at work.

He said, "The CWU working in conjunction with Royal Mail decided that it would be unsafe to work in the premises until a thorough professional deep clean had occurred."

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Tower Hamlets strike defies Labour council

by SARAH BATES

THOUSANDS OF council workers in Tower Hamlets are preparing to strike against vicious attacks on their pay, terms and conditions this week.

Unison union members in the east London borough planned walkouts on Friday this week, and Monday and Tuesday of next week.

They are battling a series of attacks under the so-called “Tower Rewards” programme pushed through by the Labour council.

It could cut severance pay by at least 80 percent, gut the flexitime scheme, slash travel allowances and reduce night work supplements.

Schemes

Bosses also want to cut workers’ increments as they move up the pay scale, and worsen disciplinary schemes.

Council bosses are threatening to sack 4,000 workers and re-employ them on worse contracts.

Kerie Anne, Unison assistant branch secretary said workers have been “providing critical services to residents over the coronavirus pandemic, sometimes at a personal risk to their own safety.”

“It is shocking and perverse that a Labour council would use the rare and aggressive tool of sacking and re-engaging its workforce to



TOWER HAMLETS Unison has a proud record of resistance

change contracts without consent,” she said.

Workers voted 90 percent to fight and the latest move from the council comes after the unions pushed back strikes due in March because of the pandemic.

In response, the council also delayed the implementation date to 6 July.

But even though council workers are still delivering vital services to vulnerable Tower Hamlets residents during a pandemic, they are also being forced to defend their jobs.

Council management are refusing to make any further offers at the Acas arbitrators.

John McLoughlin, Unison branch secretary, said a key issue is how the attacks disproportionately affect those on lower pay grades.

“The flaws in this approach have been vividly exposed throughout the Covid-19 crisis which has highlighted the roles of essential workers, often in the lower levels of organisations, and the need to address inequality across society,” he said.

“We know that staff at these levels are disproportionately from black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities and women.”

And the union said the council has refused to order an independent assessment on how Tower Rewards will impact on BAME and women workers.

Inquiry

Mick Smith, Unison black members coordinator, said the council’s refusal to engage in an independent inquiry “is very troubling”.

He said that the council management were happy to align themselves with Black Lives Matter publicly but have “steadfastly refused” to allow an assessment.

“Anyone who wants an example of how structural racism and inequality operates in practice need look no further than this.”

On strike days there will be socially distanced picket lines and protests outside the main council buildings that have remained open. Staff who are working from home because of Covid-19 will withdraw their labour remotely.

Tower Rewards has hung over thousands of workers for 18 months—it’s time to strike now and push the attacks back for good.

●Messages of support to Tower Hamlets Unison on Facebook, Virtual online rallies at 11.30am on 3 and 6 July—go to bit.ly/THrallies

ANTI-RACISM

Don’t let the racists gain after Glasgow stabbings

>>>From page 20

behaving erratically.

The right will push the bigoted argument that asylum seekers or those who suffer from mental distress are a potential threat.

The stabbings point to how the brutal experience and treatment of refugees, in their journey to Britain and through the asylum system, can break some individuals.

Many refugees from Sudan fled dictatorship, and have reported torture at the hands of the former military regime.

Even after recent political changes in Sudan, there is continuing violence from state forces in the Darfur region.

Mohammad said that many “are coming from violent places” and suffer from trauma.

“Even when you’re in a hotel you can’t do anything, you have no money, and a lot of us don’t speak English,” he said.

“Even we can’t communicate with them—they must be very isolated.

“A lot of people have mental health issues, but when you want to go to the hospital you have to register online.

“And you can’t because you don’t have the language or know the process because it hasn’t been explained.”

Syrian refugee Adnan Olbiu died, in a suspected suicide, at one of the hotels last month.

One of Adnan’s friends says he had alerted Mears about his deteriorating mental health but didn’t receive any support.

Robina Qureshi of the Positive Action in Housing charity said, “The Park Inn Hotel at West George Street in Glasgow is one of several hotels used controversially by Mears Group to house asylum seekers.

Distancing

“They were moved from temporary homes into hotels without any money at all.

“There are very desperate people living there including several of our service users.

Adnan was one of 370 asylum seekers forcibly moved into hotels with no social distancing and no money, Park Inn Hotel is one of them.

“Only yesterday, the Mears Group admitted to Scottish MPs that they had failed to do vulnerability assessments of asylum seekers who they forcibly moved.”

Refugees need proper housing and health services—and to be given the full rights to stay and live in Britain.

MEAT PROCESSING

Walk out to win safety

THE UNITE union said on Monday that Rowan Foods in north Wales was refusing to pay self-isolating workers their normal pay.

This is the plant where there was a safety walkout in April. Last week a mass outbreak of the virus was confirmed at the site.

Unite says, “Full sick pay so that employees can stay

home and be safe is in our view the key action that would have stopped the virus spreading on this site.”

If there is no pay then workers will come in when they are feeling ill.

This is not some routine dispute. Lives are at stake.

The union should be encouraging safety walkouts to force the bosses to move.

HEALTH WORKERS

Strike called at Tameside

HOSPITAL WORKERS at Tameside General Hospital in Greater Manchester are preparing to strike over pay and terms and conditions.

The Unison union members plan to begin a 48-hour walkout on Monday 13 July.

The security guards, outsourced to subcontractor Engie, are fighting for equal pay with workers who are employed directly by the NHS.

They earn only the minimum wage of £8.72 an hour—and even less for workers under the age of 25.

The lowest rate in the NHS is £9.89 per hour.

This means that the Tameside security workers are between £2,000 and £3,000 a year worse off.

One security guard said, “We feel really undervalued. We want to be there protecting our colleagues at the hospital—but this has gone on long enough.

“We deserve the NHS rates for the job, without cuts to our hours which would see us lose out.”

Other outsourced hospital workers have scored victories over equal pay in the last two years by taking action.

Every trade unionist should back the Tameside workers’ fight.

TRANSPORT

Ballot begins as haulage jobs savaged

WORKERS AT a leading haulage company have started a strike ballot.

They accuse their bosses of using Covid-19 as “a smokescreen” to close a depot in Suffolk and attack the terms and conditions of more than 100 drivers.

The Unite union began a ballot this week for its nearly 60 members, working for Goldstar Transport, based at Woolpit, near Bury St Edmunds.

The ballot closes on Tuesday 14 July.

Unite said that within days of requesting trade union recognition earlier this month, the management announced to the 107 drivers by email that it was ceasing haulage operations from Woolpit.

The union understands that 12 drivers will be made redundant with ten remaining on site and the other 85 drivers are being offered transfers to its Felixstowe headquarters 33 miles away.

The other reasons for the strike ballot are attacks on terms and conditions from April this year.

There are also serious health and safety concerns at Woolpit.

These including the alleged use of crane loads over vehicles when drivers are still in the cab.

Unite regional officer Mark Jaina said, “Unfortunately, like many unscrupulous employers, Goldstar Transport, appears to be using Covid-19 as a smokescreen to halt operations

from the Woolpit depot, and impose detrimental terms and conditions on our members.

“It can’t be a coincidence that as soon as Unite asked for trade union recognition, the bosses decided to shut down haulage operations at Woolpit.

“The company’s offer that drivers transfer to Felixstowe, on a less favourable contract is neither fair nor realistic.

“We believe that the company can well afford to keep the Woolpit operation in place, as according to its own website, it says that ‘In 2020, we have an annual turnover in excess of £110 million’.

“Management must negotiate or they could be facing strike action later this summer and right up until Christmas.”

FIREFIGHTERS

Stop London fire cutbacks

THE FBU union has vowed to fight “unthinkable” proposals to cut the budget for the London Fire Brigade by £25 million over two years. This is part of the Mayor of London’s £500 million cuts plans.

Mayor Sadiq Khan called on the government to provide financial support after the coronavirus pandemic left his administration with a budget shortfall of £493 million.

The London Fire Brigade is expected to make savings of £10 million in 2020-21 and a further £15 million in 2021-22.

The FBU has condemned the plans and has called on Sadiq Khan to live up to his promise to protect frontline services.

‘Dehumanised’ by racist system

by TOMÁŠ TENGELY-EVANS

A MOTHER of two women who were murdered says revelations of cops’ misconduct “speaks volumes of the ethos” that runs through the Metropolitan police force.

Two sisters, Nicole Smallman and Bibaa Henry, were stabbed to death at a park in Wembley, west London, earlier this month.

Mina Smallman, their mother and the former Archdeacon of Southend, complained about the Met’s response and organised her own search after they went missing.

Two police officers have now been suspended amid allegations that they took selfies with the bodies of the black women.

Mina said the pictures “dehumanised” Nicole and Bibaa and took “our grief to another place”.

“They were nothing to them and what’s worse, they sent them on to members of the public,” she told the BBC.

“If ever we needed an example of how toxic it has become, those police officers felt so safe, so untouchable, that they felt they could take photographs of dead black



BIBAA HENRY (left) and Nicole Smallman



girls and send them on.

“It speaks volumes of the ethos that runs through the Metropolitan Police.”

The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) said the pictures were allegedly “shared with a small number of others”.

The police’s pet watchdog added the Met was “handling matters involving members of the public who may have received those images”. The

IOPC is also investigating how the Met dealt with calls from worried family and friends of the sisters after they went missing.

Park

Nicole and other friends had been celebrating Bibaa’s birthday at the park on the evening of 5 June.

Police believe they were killed by a stranger, through repeated stabbing, in the

early hours of 6 June.

The sisters’ bodies were only found the following day. Mina says the police were slow to respond when the sisters were reported missing.

She had to coordinate a search mission on the weekend that her daughters died.

Nicole’s boyfriend, Adam, found the bodies and the murder weapon.

The response to the

Wembley Park murders show how institutional racism runs through the British police and society.

Mina said the police were “making assumptions” and that she “knew instantly why they didn’t care”.

“They didn’t care because they looked at my daughter’s address and thought they knew who she was,” she said. “A black woman who lives on a council estate.”

Anti-racist protests continue in towns and cities across Britain

THOUSANDS OF people marched on a Black Trans Lives protest in central London last Saturday.

On the same day thousands also marched to demand “Justice for Shukri Abdi”.

The Somali refugee and school student drowned in the River Irwell in Bury, Greater Manchester, last summer.

Meanwhile, anti-racists “took the knee” for Black Lives Matter in towns and cities across Britain last Wednesday.

The Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) day of action came in the fifth week of protests in the wake of the

police murder of George Floyd and in solidarity with the uprisings against racism in the US.

Supporters of the SUTR group in west Wales held protests across three locations, with 15 in Pembroke Dock, 75 in Haverfordwest and 60 in Tenby.

On the same evening activists gathered in Victoria Square in Birmingham.

And around 35 local residents took the knee in the Pennfields area of Wolverhampton in the West Midlands.

Around 80 people rallied in Mile End Park in Tower Hamlets, east London.



London protest PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Tahera had come to show solidarity with the family of Youness Bentahar, who was violently arrested in the borough one year ago this month.

They have found out that the IOPC police watchdog will not be pursuing the case.

“There was an investigation by the IOPC and we had hoped for disciplinary action,” she told Socialist Worker.

“Today we found out from the solicitor that it has been dropped.”

Youness was violently arrested after parking on a single yellow line on Abbot Row, Tower Hamlets, where his sister lives.

“They held him down,” said Tahera, who lives next door to his sister.

“He was gasping for breath, his body was in shock.”

Meanwhile, around 60 people turned out in Meersbrook Park in Sheffield, South Yorkshire.

And in nearby Rotherham, activist Phil Turner reports, “Our take the knee protest developed into the biggest yet with a number of young people joining.”

“It created an exciting atmosphere. “We also challenged and saw off a white lives matter racist.”

Fight right wing lies on refugees

RIGHT WINGERS want to use the stabbings in Glasgow last week to stoke a backlash against migrants and refugees.

Police shot dead Badreddin Abedlla Adam, a Sudanese asylum seeker, at the Park Inn.

He is suspected of stabbing people on Friday. Six people are in hospital after the incident at the hotel, one of several being used to house asylum seekers in the city.

Nigel Farage quickly described it as a “hotel housing illegal immigrants”.

“All over the UK, hotels are filling up with young men who are coming across the Channel,” he said.

One Glasgow asylum seeker, Mohammad, says many now fear going out from the hotels.

“I’m just staying indoors now,” he told Socialist Worker. “There’s been these far right people down in town during the last few weeks.”

Protests

“When we go to protests at George Square, the far right people are getting involved so I’m trying to stay away from town.”

He added, “There’s real quiet at the moment, everybody is grouping up in rooms and keeping to themselves.”

Two weeks ago around 200 far right thugs attacked refugees and their supporters in Glasgow.

The motivations and precise circumstances leading up to the stabbings are not clear.

One activist said the Sudanese man had been complaining of being “very hungry” after being rehoused in the hotel.

Another volunteer reports that he had been on hunger strike, one of a series of food refusal protests at asylum hotels in Glasgow.

Other reports say that staff were told the day before that the man was suffering from mental distress and had started

>>>continued on page 19